



June 21, 2001

Gus - obviously you've been  
unavailable. Here's the  
update. Thanks.  
K

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Mr. Gus Henningburg  
40 Clinton Street, Suite 700  
Newark, NJ 07102

Dear Gus:

As a supporter of the Essex County Construction Careers Program (ECCCP) that the Institute for Social Justice has been incubating, I wanted to provide you with the latest information about its progress. We are very pleased to be able to report that we received many more applicants than we expected, that we have identified a highly qualified candidate to serve as interim director, and that we are in the midst of intensive screening and interviewing of potential program participants.

With the active support of six school districts, ECCCP received over 200 applications, approximately 75% of whom are Newark residents. This reflects in large part the success the program has had in engaging with appropriate personnel within the school system. ECCCP staff and union representatives have conducted in-school visits to guidance counselors, teachers, and students at the thirteen public high schools in Newark, the four vocational high schools in Essex County and public high schools in East Orange, Orange and Irvington. The active support of Marion Bolden, the Superintendent of the Newark Public Schools, has also been instrumental in the success of the program to date. Ms. Bolden sent home a letter with each graduating senior explaining the program and has publicly embraced the program in newspaper articles in the English, Spanish and Portuguese press.

ECCCP is now involved in screening the applicants so that the up to 60 participants are those best qualified for eventual entry into formal, building trades apprenticeship programs. This screening includes the Work Keys skills assessment test that measures proficiency in reading and applied mathematics and an in-person interview. Consistent with the underlying model which predicates the success of this program upon the inclusion of the trade unions in all aspects of its development, potential participants have been interviewed by three person teams that include representatives of the building trade unions, school districts and community-based organizations. ECCCP expects to make the final selections by June 22nd. A family orientation night is planned which will provide an opportunity for the parents and relatives of the successful candidates to learn about the program, to understand the commitment required to complete the program and to understand the well-paying, long-term employment potential offered by the

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construction trades. You are welcome to attend this event; an invitation and directions are attached.

We are also very close to announcing the selection of an Interim Project Director who will bring extensive experience in vocational education and who has been an active member of the Joint Steering Committee that helped to formulate ECCCP from its inception. We hope to be able to make this announcement in the next week.

Again, thank you for your ongoing support and interest in this program. Please feel free to call me or Becky Dockett, who is heading the project, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Zimmerman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kenneth H. Zimmerman

Encls.